GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE
LOK SABHA

STARRED QUESTION NO:45
ANSWERED ON:27.07.2005
BAN ON PRODUCTION AND DISTRIBUTION OF NON IODISED SALT
Adsul Shri Anandrao Vithoba;Yadav Shri Ram Kripal

Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government has a proposal to ban the production and distribution of non-iodised salt;

(b) if so, the details thereof alongwith the reasons therefor;

(c) whether a large number of people have been falling victims to goiter and other diseases due to consumption of non-iodised salt in the country;

(d) if so, the details thereof; and

(e) the concrete measures-being taken by the Government to make available iodised salt at affordable price to the common man in the country?

Answer

THE MINISTER OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (DR. ANBUMANI RAMADOSS)

(a)to(e): A statement is laid on the Table of the House.

STATEMENT REFERRED TO IN REPLY TO LOK SABHA STARRED QUESTION NO. 45 FOR 27TH JULY, 2005 .....

The Government of India has taken a decision to restrict the sale of common salt for direct human consumption unless it is iodised. Non-iodised salt may continue to be sold for iodization, iron fortification, animal use, preservation, manufacturing medicines and industrial use under proper label declaration.

The Government has issued a draft notification GSR 340 (E) dated 27.5.2005 under PFA Rules, 1955, and invited objections/suggestions to the proposal to restrict the sale of edible common salt for direct human consumption unless the same is iodized.

The restrictions proposed vide above mentioned notification are for the following reasons:-

(i) availability of iodized salt is essential to control iodine deficiency diseases.

(ii) the consumption of iodized salt in India is lowest in comparison to other countries of the region as both iodized salt and non-iodized salt are available side by side in the country and there is no provision as on date to restrict the sale of non-iodised common salt.

(iii) the State Governments cannot, as in the past, ban or restrict the sale of common salt under the PFA Act, 1954, because of the Supreme Court Judgement dated 2.8.2004 in Godawat Pan Masala Products (P) Ltd. Vs Union of India and Others vide which the Hon`ble Supreme Court has clarified that the powers of the State Governments under PFA Rules, 1955, to ban the manufacture, sale or distribution of any food article under Section 7
(iv) are only transitory in nature and intended to deal with local emergencies and can last only for short period while such emergency lasts.

As per surveys conducted by Directorate General of Health Services, State Health Directorates, Indian Council of Medical Research and other health institutes, in 321 districts covering all States/UTs, 260 districts are endemic for Iodine Deficiency Disorders (IDD) i.e. where the prevalence of IDD is more than 10%. Thus, no State/UT in the country is free from IDD. As per estimates in 2003, 20 crore people are at risk of IDD while the number of persons suffering from various disorders in the country is about 7 crores. Women of reproductive age group and children are the most vulnerable groups for the nutritional iodine deficiency disorders. In order to prevent and control IDD, Government is implementing the National Iodine Deficiency Disorders Control Programme (NIDDCP) in the entire country. The main components of the programme are conducting IDD surveys, supply of iodated salt in place of common salt, laboratory monitoring of salt and urine and health education and publicity. 13 States have included iodated salt under Public Distribution System (PDS) to ensure supply of iodated salt at affordable prices to families below poverty line. ....